



G R E S H A M  
S M I T H   A N D  
P A R T N E R S

January 8, 2010

**MEETING NOTES**

**GDOT STAKEHOLDER MEETING WITH GEORGIA CHAPTER OF TRAIL OF TEARS  
ASSOCIATION  
PICKENS COUNTY, GEORGIA  
GS&P Project No. 26340.09**

MEETING DATE:     December 16, 2009

PARTICIPANTS:     Scott Shelton — Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
                         Kent Black – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
                         Jody Braswell – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
                         Jill Brown – Edwards-Pitman Environmental (EP)  
                         Garrett Silliman – Edwards-Pitman Environmental (EP)  
                         Linda Geiger – GA Trail of Tears Association (TOTA)  
                         Jeff Bishop – GA Trail of Tears Association (TOTA)

DISCUSSION:        SR 136 SAFETY PROJECT

1.    GS&P highlighted the history of the project
  - a. 2002 – GDOT District Six identified need for safety project
  - b. 2005 – Consultant recommends operation and safety improvements as part of county wide plan
  - c. 2007 – GS&P is hired by GDOT to complete safety project along SR 136 and Edwards-Pitman begins environmental study
  - d. 2008 – FHWA directs GDOT to coordinate with stakeholders and form Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC).
  - e. 2009 – GDOT coordinates with GS&P to coordinate with stakeholders and form CAC.
2.    GS&P noted the numerous fatalities and accidents along SR 136 as shown on the aerial display that prompted GDOT to create a safety project for the corridor.
3.    Based on the fact that the alignment of the roadway has not changed since the 1890's, TOTA noted it was self evident why so many accidents had occurred.
4.    TOTA concerned about preserving Trail of Tears / Old Federal Road since it helps tell the story of the Trail of Tears to the public.

Design Services For The Built Environment

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5. TOTA requested GDOT preserve the Federal Road-Trail of Tears route along SR 136 as much as possible, but the TOTA recognized that some impacts to the Federal Road-Trail of Tears route might be necessary to improve the safety of SR 136. TOTA would prefer view sheds be created along SR 136 to view the Federal Road-Trail of Tears route. TOTA requested the Mission site be preserved and a view shed developed. The TOTA also requested a view shed for the Fort Newnan site be provided though not as a high priority as the Mission site.
6. GS&P requested TOTA bring data and maps to first CAC meeting to help GS&P and GDOT identify potential view sheds that need to be preserved.
7. TOTA has coordinated with GDOT on other projects, and TOTA sees GDOT as a partner in preserving the Trail of Tears.
8. TOTA is working with the National Park Service to establish a national park. The purpose of the park would be to mark the trail and maintain as many view sheds of the trail as possible. TOTA has not heard if a park has been discussed or considered for the Trail of Tears in Pickens County. TOTA recommends coordinating with Steve Barnes at National Park Service in Arizona.
9. TOTA is developing plan to sign the Trail of Tears along SR 136 and is coordinating with FHWA for an approved sign. TOTA will provide any signage concepts to GS&P to consider placement as part of the safety project.
10. TOTA will email all information they have on the Federal Road-Trail of Tears locations to Edwards-Pitman and Gresham, Smith and Partners.
11. GS&P emphasized that the proposed project's purpose is to address safety concerns. Any proposed improvements would still utilize a two lane roadway section with corrections to the horizontal and vertical curves along SR 136.
12. GS&P anticipates and will strive to ensure the proposed safety improvements on SR 136 can be balanced with the preservation of the cultural and the historical resources along SR 136.
13. GS&P noted that currently early stakeholder coordination is underway. To date, GS&P has met with NWGRC, Marble Valley Historical Society and the City of Talking Rock and Pickens County in addition to TOTA.
14. GS&P stated that to facilitate public involvement a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) would be formed from stakeholders in the area and would meet 2-3 times





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to gather information and build consensus for an alternative to address safety issues and preserve cultural and historical resources. The CAC would meet 2-3 times to gather information about the corridor and build consensus.

15. TOTA recommended Linda Grieger be the CAC representative and Jeff Bishop be a part of any communications.
16. In regard to the cemetery on SR 136, the TOTA noted that no records have been found of Cherokee burials at Fort Newnan. TOTA doubtful any Cherokee burials occurred since Fort was in place for only 2 to 3 weeks. TOTA stated potential for more Cherokee Indian settlements along Old Hwy. 5.
17. In January 2010, EP will begin Phase 1 Archeology resource survey and will look for specific archeological findings by performing shovel tests along the corridor. EP will use ground penetrating radar and metal detection at various shovel testing sites to further identify archeological resources in the field.

This represents our understanding of the items discussed at this meeting. If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the information contained herein, please contact me.

Prepared by: Scott Shelton, P.E.  
Project Engineer

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